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ABSTRACT

This paper uses research and propositions to argue that staff development funds provided under Chapter 1 of the Education Consolidation Improvement Act of 1981 be used to integrate understanding of the special needs and prospects of and for Chapter 1 students throughout a school. Rather than isolate staff development opportunities within a Chapter 1 resource teacher group, it is believed more reasonable to extend those opportunities to all professionals. This argument is based upon the proposition that the school is a complex environment, composed of a number of interacting variables, all of which have some impact upon teachers and students. Staff development that focuses the environment in all of its contextual complexity upon students' academic and social advancement is believed to be more powerful than staff development that isolates teachers from one another, concentrates upon segments of curriculum and instruction, creates "minicontexts" that may be in contrast to the larger context, and dilutes rather than strengthens the accumulated power of schooling upon student outcomes. The paper begins by defining the concept of staff development and then presents supporting research. The role of the principal is discussed since he or she can control the environment such that its requirements and regularities become the content and process of a staff development strategy. Fourteen features of effective staff development programs are described. A list of references is appended. (PS)

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CHAPTER 1 AND THE REGULAR SCHOOL: STAFF DEVELOPMENT

by

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Introduction

This paper presents a point of view about effective staff development for teachers and uses that point of view to argue that Chapter 1-related staff development practices should be integrated into Chapter 1 school settings. This integration can only be accomplished, I believe, if the practices and programs are made available to all persons in the school, although modestly differentially across role groups, rather than only to Chapter 1 teachers, administrators, and aides. This assertion is supported by research findings, by propositions about school and instructional effectiveness, and, to a degree, by common sense. Relevant literature is used to buttress the position that Chapter 1 staff development should be school-wide, not targeted to special educational personnel groups.

It should be understood at the outset of this paper that staff development is not a "mature" field of study; the body of research-derived knowledge about the nature and effects of staff development programs and activities is currently sparse (Koehler, 1983). Therefore, it is necessary to use a good deal of research with objects other than staff development to create a conceptually complete argument for this paper. These other bodies of research findings include those related to effective teaching, effective schools, school change, and schools as organizations. As will be argued, knowledge from such studies suggests strongly that staff development conceived as school (versus classroom) activity is potentially powerful for the accomplishment of Chapter 1 objectives.

A Conceptualization of Staff Development

Staff development is considered for this paper to be any systematic attempt to alter educational professionals' behavior, knowledge, and/or values toward some specified end (Griffin, 1983). Two conceptualizations of how this alteration can or should be brought about are present in the literature and observed in practice. (The conceptualizations are not "pure types." That is, each will contain elements of the other but the dominant mode will be one or the other.)

The most typical conceptualization of staff development is one that has specified content and process, with the emphasis upon some predetermined content (Howey & Vaughan, 1983). Delivering staff development this way suggests that there has been some decision as to what teachers, for instance, ought to know or believe or be able to do and that the principal issue

for the staff developer is to find the most efficient and effective delivery system. An example of this might be the decision by school district officers that teachers should be able to deliver direct instruction in a mastery learning-oriented reading program. Subsequent to this decision, process or delivery decisions are made about such issues as who should teach the teachers, for what length of time, using what materials, in what settings, with what follow-up, and so forth. In such instances of staff development, using research terms, the educator is the subject of an intervention planned, executed, and occasionally, evaluated by others.

An emerging alternate conceptualization of staff development differs sharply from the one noted above. Instead of concentrating upon the development and implementation of a content-driven intervention to be introduced into teachers' or others' professional lives, attention is given to manipulating the environment in which teachers do their work such that the work is positively affected (Griffin, 1983). An example of this might be activity centered on decreasing the isolation of teachers from other teachers in the belief that more opportunities for professional collegiality will promote school-wide understandings of problems and prospects, serve as a stimulus for teacher collaboration on schooling issues, make possible coherent policies and practices across classrooms, make the school a more pleasant and rewarding place for adults, and so on. Naturally, enacting such a strategy will eventually call for the introduction of "new" content, but that introduction is in response to, rather than the cause of, the structural manipulation of school context variables (Stallings, 1981).

This context conceptualization of staff development has both intuitive and knowledge-based appeal. Observations of staff development programs for practicing teachers support the conclusion that large numbers of externally-developed interventions are unsuccessful (Goodlad & Klein, 1974). The lack of effectiveness is blamed variously on lack of "ownership" by teachers of the central components of the intervention, absence of consideration of the situation specific context variables across schools, the sporadic nature of opportunities to learn about or do what is expected (e.g., the one-time workshop, a speech by a visiting dignitary), the expense associated with providing another layer of school activity on existing programs, the relative dearth of technical expertise available given any single innovation, and problems associated with maintenance of the change by school-external monitors. In the best situations, programs that are termed effective are more often than not those that have undergone mutual adaptation, changes in intent, procedures, or outcomes as a consequence of the influence of the contexts into which they were introduced (Berman & McLaughlin, 1975).

The potential of the context conceptualization builds to some extent from what has been learned from the so-called "effective schools" research. This body of research suggests that there are school context variables that are consistently associated with success. (The definition of school success is more often than not pupil scores on tests of academic achievement, usually reading and mathematics (Barnes, 1981). Although there are conceptual, philosophical, and methodological difficulties in this line of research, the general agreement across studies supports the conclusion that attention to context in general and to specific manifestations of certain context variables in particular is a fruitful way to think about increasing the power of the school to positively affect pupil outcomes (Purkey & Smith, 1983).

What does this have to do with staff development, particularly staff development aimed at increasing the effectiveness of Chapter 1 programs? Quite simply, if the school context is such a powerful influence upon the outcomes of educational programs, attending to that context as staff development seems a reasonable proposal to implement and investigate (Schiffer, 1980).

Some years ago, I claimed that there should be two major goal areas for staff development activity (Griffin, 1979). The first goal area included conventional goals such as improving pedagogy, introducing innovative curricula, creating more effective testing procedures, and the like. This goal area includes content that is similar if not identical to the content-process conceptualization discussed above. But it was seen as being intimately connected to and influenced by another goal area. Goal Area Two included contextual goals for staff development, including such items as increased collegiality, greater teacher participation in school decision-making, increased cosmopolitanism of school persons, and so on. The argument is that the content and process expectations included in the first goal area will be heavily influenced, in terms of success, by the degree of presence of the context variables in the second. For example, to expect implementation of new curricula in a school, it is important that the school be characterized by an ethos of inquiry and experimentation (Ward, Pascarella, & Carnes, 1985). The development of a consistent and articulated school testing program calls for a professionally collegial teacher group. And undergirding both goal areas, the content-process one and the context one, is the structural properties of schools in the forms of governing structures, reward systems, communication systems, evaluation schemes, and the like.

What this briefly described model of staff development accomplished for me was the integration of (1) what should be the objectives of attention, (2) which context conditions would

contribute to successful implementation, and (3) the organizational properties that had to be in place in some coherent form to promote success. The passage of time since this sketchy integrated model was advanced has provided much richer evidence to support it as a reasonable way to think about staff development.

For Chapter 1 settings, the context approach seems reasonable from several perspectives. First, it is acknowledged that the Chapter 1 programs are not well-developed educational or instructional interventions (Carter, 1984). My understanding of the Chapter 1 expectations is that the provision of the services demands less that a particular brand of service is made available to eligible students than that some service that is logically related to the needs of students is made available. This rather "loose" expectation seems to rest for success upon the wit and the will of local and state education agencies to define the nature of the Chapter 1 services (McLaughlin, 1982). It is reasonable to assume, given certain school change research findings, that the interventions that arise from the school context into which they will be introduced has more chance of successful implementation than interventions that are prescribed from district or state levels of decision-making (Ginsburg & Turnbull, 1981). This is not to deny the appropriateness of such agencies guiding local decision-making and implementation with rules and regulations in the forms of guidelines. The argument, though, is that these rules and regulations should be ones that cause teachers and administrators to work together within a given context such that all of the appropriate context influences can be brought to bear upon the provision of educational opportunity for Chapter 1 students. We do know that most schooling issues are site-specific; although there are generic properties of schools, how those properties are made present is a function of a particular school environment (Romberg & Price, 1983). This is a compelling reason for formulating situation-specific interventions.

Second, although there are exceptions to this generalization, Chapter 1 students tend to be located disproportionately across school settings. In some schools there are no such students, in others they make up a significant percentage of the population. The latter case seems to be more common in urban centers than in suburban or rural settings. When Chapter 1 students are indeed, a majority or close to a majority in schools, it is reasonable to assume that the entire school faculty and administration should be preoccupied with their instruction. It is acknowledged, for instance, that "regular" and Chapter 1 teachers historically and currently are at odds with one another in intellectual, practical, and collegial ways (Kimbrough & Hill, 1981). This, I believe, is a natural consequence of ignoring the concept of the school as the ideal

unit for change and effectiveness, as opposed to consideration of individual classrooms, teachers, or instructional programs as the most desired unit (Goodlad, 1975). The student should be the focus for instructional improvement and the school should be the organizational mechanism to impact upon that focus. For a student to receive qualitatively different instructional attention from the regular and Chapter 1 teachers is to create a dysfunctionality that rebounds to the detriment of student affect and intellect. By using the school as the unit for better understanding and acting upon the learning problems of the Chapter 1 student, it would be possible to reinforce and strengthen instruction across settings (e.g., the conventional classroom and the pullout program). The teachers in each setting would understand what is going on in the other and act upon that knowledge through reinforcement, extension, and enrichment.

Third, school level leadership can be made more efficient and effective if it is focused on context issues that are school-wide than it is expected to shift intellectual and programmatic gears according to the requirements of numbers of school-based programs (Griffin et al., 1983). The recurring criticism of school leadership as lacking in effectiveness surely will not be reduced by expecting that leadership be distributed across a number of intentions. Integrating Chapter 1 program goals and practices into across-school activities such as staff development has promise for both promoting coherence for students, as noted above, and increasing efficiency and effectiveness of leadership behavior.

Fourth, with the exception of reduction in instructional group size, it can be argued that the instructional strategies most predictive of success in pullout programs for Chapter 1 students will be equally effective in conventional classrooms, particularly in those schools where the Chapter 1 students are located in significant numbers. Much of the so-called "teacher effectiveness" research was conducted, in fact, in schools with characteristics markedly like those in Chapter 1 settings (Barnes, 1981; Good, 1982; Rosenshine, 1983). To use these research findings only with Chapter 1 teacher specialists, as the content of staff development, does a distinct disservice to teachers who also work with Chapter 1 students in conventional classrooms. Again using the argument that the focus of staff development should be in largest measure upon student outcomes, helping teachers to come to grips with instructional strategies that impact those outcomes should be school-wide, not selectively determined. Although it could be argued that such help could be provided for one group and then another (as opposed to all together), this seems needlessly cumbersome and in compliance only with Federal rules and regulations rather than in compliance with common sense.

Fifth, it is widely understood that schooling for any youngster is made up of a number of interacting variables (Perrone & Associates, 1985). A practice that depends upon selection of only one of those variables, a Chapter 1 pullout program for example, to make an observable difference in student outcomes is naive at best and mischievous at worst. It is naive because it denies the influence upon achievement of integrated curriculum offerings, consistent instructional strategies, peer relationships, school organization, and the like. It may be mischievous because it sets up the intervention for limited success or failure. As some of the formal observations of Chapter 1 suggest, the isolation of the programs from the ongoing instructional system of the school puts many participating youngsters at educational risk, particularly in the social sciences and the arts and humanities. Therefore, to concentrate staff development aimed at increasing the power of the school as a whole (versus only Chapter 1 designated teacher specialists) seem to be a more potentially powerful influence on Chapter 1 students.

Last, the preceding discussion leads to the conclusion that the most typical Chapter 1 intervention, pullout programs whereby Chapter 1 students are removed from their conventional classrooms for "special" instruction, may not be the best way to promote the goals of Chapter 1. Although small-group instruction for Chapter 1 students may be an important piece of the instructional program, it is theoretically and practically problematic when seen as the entire intervention. Certainly, decreasing the numbers of students in an instructional group has the promise of increasing instructional attention per student. This is a desirable strategy. Its desirability, however, depends in no small measure upon the place it has in a larger instructional context, a school-wide strategy that puts considerable intellectual and practical force behind increasing educational opportunity and outcomes for all students, including those designated as Chapter 1 participants (Sarason, 1971).

Clearly, I am arguing in this paper for a revision of staff development program guidelines related to Chapter 1 programs. The argument suggests that staff development should logically be focused upon comprehensively enhancing the educational opportunity of students identified as eligible for Chapter 1 services; that such students are quite often significant percentages of schools' populations; that segmentation of Chapter 1 interventions and, by association, staff development to increase the power of the interventions is to ignore the complex of interacting school context variables with influence upon pupil outcomes; that school-wide staff development will promote coherence of approach and strategy related to all students, including Chapter 1 designated participants, and that the school is the logical unit for change, in this case

changing the educational opportunities made available to Chapter 1 students.

The next section presents research and propositions in support of this conceptualization.

Staff Development-Related Research

One of the most compelling longitudinal studies of school change and improvement was conducted by Goodlad and associates in the late 1960s. This effort involved eighteen schools from a like number of school districts and studied the change process, with particular attention to teacher change, over a five-year period (Bentzen, 1974). Among the findings of the study are two concepts related to successful school and teacher. First, the school is the logical unit for change and, second, the change process is characterized by a cycle of teachers' group behavior. The change process in successful schools was guided by attention to what was called DDAE: dialogue, decision-making, action, and evaluation. Although the phases of the process often overlapped or moved backward and forward in fits and starts, teachers and administrators in these schools engaged in extensive talk, formally and informally, about school problems and issues (dialogue). They then made decisions about how to move ahead toward acting upon the issues (decision-making). The decisions led to concerted and focused activity (action). And, finally, after a reasonable amount of time had been devoted to the issue-related activities, staff members reflected upon their impact (evaluation). This was a naturally occurring cycle, not one that was induced into the school settings, and was consistently associated with successful change.

Building upon this research, two comprehensive research programs sought to both refine the DDAE conceptualization and introduce it experimentally into existing school situations. The Interactive Research and Development on Teaching Project (IR&DT; Tikunoff, Ward, & Griffin, 1979) was designed to engage school persons in a systematic assessment of school and classroom problems, design methodologically and conceptually rigorous attempts to resolve the problems, collect relevant data, and draw conclusions that would be of use to school and classroom colleagues. Although the IR&DT work was designed initially as an alternate means of knowledge production, it was soon discovered that it contributed significantly to teacher participants' professional growth. That growth was characterized by a broader awareness of the school as a dynamic context for learning and teaching, more skill in manipulating school variables toward the resolution of persistent problems, increased sense of professionalism by participants, and greater teacher efficacy. (Interestingly, one of the participating schools was involved in Chapter 1-like interventions and

focused its interactive research and development attention on increasing instructional time for students through reduction of classroom interruptions. This reduction of non-instructional use of teacher and student time was seen as a major contributor to the success of the instructional programs over time.)

Another research program, Changing Teacher Practice, was conceptualized as a school-level intervention through which school principals, as a consequence of a five-day immersion in effective teaching and effective leadership research findings, developed plans for working with their teachers toward introduction of the teaching findings into classrooms (Griffin & Barnes, in press). Although the research team never worked with teachers, only with principals in a workshop setting prior to the opening of the school year, the teachers did, in fact, alter their teaching toward alignment with research findings regarding teacher effectiveness. The principals who were most successful in working with teachers toward this end were the ones who most systematically used the research on leadership findings to guide their interactions with teachers. For Chapter 1 purposes, the study is also significant in that the effective teaching research findings are mostly based upon classrooms in which teachers worked effectively with low socioeconomic status (SES) and predicted (but not realized) underachieving youngsters. Also, the findings were fairly readily introduced into both Chapter 1-like and upper SES, high student achievement schools with positive outcomes.

A number of school level variables are fairly consistently associated with school success (Purkey & Smith, 1983). For the purposes of this paper, the variables included here are those that have some logical relationship to staff development activities. In line with the argument presented earlier, they are also ones that demonstrate the influence of the context upon teacher growth and student achievement. They offer further encouragement to those of us who believe that staff development must be a well-understood school-wide strategy rather than a segmented one. Briefly, the research suggests that:

- the school principal is a key actor in bringing about school success;
- teacher growth is most probable when teachers have systematic and consistent opportunities to interact around professional, school-based issues;
- school success is influenced by the presence of school-wide goals and, in turn, school-wide goals are developed as a consequence of professional collegiality among teachers and administrators in schools;

- the presence of school goals related to academic success is associated with evidence of that success;
- staff development success is associated with available opportunities to link teachers with in-school and outside-of-school technical assistance.

The list is illustrative rather than comprehensive. What it suggests is that, as Purkey and Smith (1983) have claimed, the classroom level behaviors of teachers and, to some extent, students are influenced by school level variables such as principal behavior and what can be termed "ethos" variables such as expectations for DDAE, professional collegiality, participatory goal setting, and so on. Naturally, a school principal, in most instances, can manipulate the school variables more readily than any other individual member of the school culture. In effective settings, though, that manipulation is acted out more as reasoned professional interactions than mandate, more as problem identification than solution by fiat, and more as creation of opportunities than prescriptions for practice. In other words, the principal can control the environment such that the requirements and regularities of the environment become the content and process of a staff development strategy.

The principal engages in this context control, admittedly with others, through the exercise of leadership knowledge, skill, and disposition. (The list below is a synthesis of findings from a number of sources, including Berman & McLaughlin, 1974; Gross, Giaquinta, & Bernstein, 1971; Hall & Loucks, 1981; Stallings, 1981; Little, 1981; Williams, 1983). She/he

- focuses on teacher behavior;
- identifies specific, concrete resources, and available technical assistance;
- provides teachers with opportunities to interact with one another about teaching and schooling;
- provides teachers with opportunities to plan together;
- provides teachers with opportunities to implement their plans;
- diagnoses school- and classroom-specific norms of operation;
- uses teacher concerns as bases for staff development activities;

- works with teachers on adaptation of teaching strategies according to the characteristics of students, the classroom, and the school;
- provides in-classroom technical assistance to teachers;
- links teachers to technical assistance outside the immediate school environment;
- provides teachers with feedback which is consistent, objective, concrete, and focused;
- provides consistent, ongoing assistance to teachers;
- adapts his/her behavior according to personal and organizational characteristics or participants;
- uses teachers' time to deal with teachers' problems, issues, and concerns;
- demonstrates knowledge of the issue under consideration;
- engages teachers in problem identification, solution formulation, and testing activities;
- reflects upon the effects of his/her behavior and uses that reflection as a basis for decisions about maintenance or modification of that behavior (Griffin et al., 1983).

Obviously, these are not typical staff development strategies in the sense of a content-process model. They comprise a school context plan of operation, however, that has been shown to be influential upon the way teachers go about the business of teaching. In effect, the principal who uses these behaviors interactively creates a school "press" for improvement and change, a context influence that is rooted in an understanding of how professionals best come to grips with increasing the power of their work and the professional authority related to that work.

In a prior review of staff development research, I concluded that there were 8 features of an effective staff development program (Griffin, 1983). They are:

1. It will be designed as a consequence of systematic problem identification by those most directly related to the problem.
2. It will be interactive.
3. It will mitigate to some degree status differences between teachers and administrators.
4. It will depend less on consultants and more on teachers and administrators for substantive and procedure guidance.
5. It will be formulated, in part, in terms of a careful analysis of the organization and the people for whom it is intended.
6. It will be formulated and monitored largely according to perceptions of the participants.
7. It will be flexible and responsive to the changes in participants and the changes in the setting.
8. It will be, within reasonable limits, situation-specific.

Recent analyses of the findings of three large-scale studies of teacher education (preservice, induction, and staff development for practicing teachers) revealed a set of program features that were consistently associated with success (Griffin, in press). (Success is defined here as being the blend of realized program objectives, positive perceptions of participants, and expert opinion.) The features are:

1. The program is context sensitive. Staff development efforts that do not take into account the significant characteristics of the contexts they are meant to influence are often either ignored or disregarded as meaningless by participants.
2. The program is knowledge-based. Although it should be axiomatic that some form of knowledge (research, theory, proposition, craft) should guide staff development work, it is not unusual to find a strange admixture of opinion or an incoherent blend of competing claims at the core. This knowledge base must be public and widely understood, even though it may not be universally believed to be the best knowledge.
3. The program is participatory and collaborative. Throughout this paper, it has been implied that

teachers should be more than just subjects of staff development. In the research reviewed for this set of features of successful programs, it is clear that the greater "stake" the teacher has in the program, the more probable the program will succeed. This participation and collaboration appears to be a key ingredient in promoting teacher growth.

4. The program is ongoing. A major complaint by teachers is that their opportunities to engage in staff development are not coherent over time. A workshop here, an institute there, a visiting expert yet somewhere else do not add up to a coherent program. Successful programs move over time in ways that are not disconnected events.
5. The program is developmental. As noted immediately above, successful staff development is coherent over time and that coherence is most often a function of the developmental feature. That is, the connected processes and events aim toward something, such as accumulated knowledge and skill in a well-defined domain of professional knowledge or behavior, and are based upon a conception of teacher growth and change.
6. The program is analytic and reflective. Too often school people are caught up in their daily activities to the extent that they have few opportunities to singly or collectively analyze those events and reflect upon their meaning. Successful staff development efforts include as major components time and rewards for standing back from the dailiness of schooling and using that ideological and temporal distance to stimulate analysis and reflection.

These features are ones that are most efficiently and effectively introduced and sustained at the school level. Of course, staff development programs even at the school level can have planned variations. Specially prepared experiences for grade level teachers or subject specialists or Chapter 1 resource teachers can be planned and implemented. The point to be made, though, is that these planned variations should fit within a school's plan for professional growth of its members and not be isolated from the larger context. This concentration upon integration, if research and intuition are accurate, should contribute to the influence of instruction on youngsters, the sense of professionalism of staff, the stimulation of a positive working climate, conservation of limited resources, and ongoing school improvement.

Conclusion

This paper has used research and propositions to argue that Chapter 1 staff development funds be used to integrate understanding of the special needs and prospects of and for Chapter 1 students throughout a school. Rather than isolate staff development opportunities within a Chapter 1 resource teacher group, it is believed more reasonable to extend those opportunities to all professionals. This argument is based upon the proposition that the school is a complex environment, composed of a number of interacting variables, all of which have some impact upon teachers and students. Staff development that focuses the environment in all of its contextual complexity upon students' academic and social advancement is believed to be more powerful than staff development that isolates teachers from one another, concentrates upon segments of curriculum and instruction, creates "minicontexts" that may be in contrast to the larger context, and dilutes rather than strengthens the accumulated power of schooling upon student outcomes.

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